

NAMC N^otes



Where Your New Best Friend is Waiting!

**5585 Sabre Road (near Janaf)
664-PETS
www.norfolk.gov/animals**

From Military Highway, turn onto Lowery Road (between Walgreen's and Ruby Tuesday). The shelter is just around the curve on your left.

Please visit **namc.petfinder.com** for pictures & bios of most of our animals.

Adoption Hours:

Mon.-Sat., 11:00 am-4:00 pm

Lost & Found / Owner Surrenders:

Monday-Friday, 8:00 am-4:00 pm

Saturday, 8:30 am-4:00 pm

Adoption Fees:

Dogs/Puppies: \$90

(\$31 if already spayed/neutered)

Cat/Kittens: \$76

(\$26 if already spayed/neutered)



**THE MEDICAL
FUND FOR ANIMALS**

DONATE

Tax-deductible financial donations may be sent to:

**The Medical Fund for Animals
211 Carlisle Way
Norfolk, VA 23505**

100% of donations are used for veterinary care of shelter animals.

VOLUNTEER

If you are 16 or older and would enjoy walking and playing with dogs, cuddling with cats, and introducing shelter animals to the public, stop by for a volunteer application, or contact Pam Painter by e-mail (pkpainter@earthlink.net).

FOSTER

If you have some space for a needy dog or cat on a temporary basis, we'd love to hear from you! Fosters allow us to better serve animals who are too young or too old for shelter life, or those who need some socializing or training. Please contact Pam Painter by e-mail (pkpainter@earthlink.net) for more information.

SHELTER WISH LIST

non-clumping cat litter, empty shoe boxes or baskets (for the cats to curl up or hide in), small litter boxes, blankets or cozies, dog bones, dog and cat toys



Kasha Winston, Supervisor

New Year, New Friends

If you're considering adding a dog or cat to your family in 2006, we hope that you will make a resolution to adopt, not buy that animal! The post-holiday months are typically when our shelter sees an increase in owner surrenders of pets that were given as gifts. Help prevent a similar situation, and carefully consider the responsibilities of pet ownership by asking yourself these questions:

Is your home ready for a pet? If you rent, what types and sizes of animals are allowed? What is the pet deposit and/or monthly fee? If you own your home, do you have a fenced yard or enclosed area nearby where a dog can be walked? Are you moving in the near future? If you are and aren't sure you would be able to bring your pet along, it is best to wait until after you move to bring a pet into your home.

Is your family ready for a pet? The entire family needs to be part of the pet selection process. Does the animal you are looking at fit with your family's ability to care for him/her? Cats require different care than dogs. Dogs require different care based on breed, size, and activity level. Either way, a pet generally means 10-15 years of care, and pets need you to stick with them through the good and bad times your family may face.

Is your bank account ready for a pet? While adopting from a shelter is much cheaper than buying an animal from a pet store or breeder (NAMC adoption fees cover spay/neuter, microchip, and initial vaccines), money still needs to be budgeted for the care of the animal. Expenses range from food, toys, and annual exams to licenses, training, grooming, boarding, and unexpected medical needs. The estimated annual cost of a cat is \$400, and \$500 for small or medium dogs.

The staff and volunteers of NAMC hope that you will decide to start the new year with a "new best friend"—one of the many terrific dogs or cats at our shelter—and give the gift of life!

Ask an ACO (Animal Control Officer)

Internal Parasites and Your Pet

It wasn't until Humane Officer Bethany Cahill responded to a call about two emaciated-looking dogs that she became truly aware of the danger that hookworms pose to our pets. "The owner, who had recently moved into her home, explained that despite feeding her dogs more and more, they were becoming skinnier and skinnier," explains Cahill. She cautioned the woman that worms were likely the cause and suggested the dogs visit the vet. A fecal test detected hookworms, and confirmed Cahill's hunch.

Hookworms are 1/2" long parasites that can be deadly to dogs and cats. They attach to the small intestine, living off of the host's blood. Their presence can cause the intestinal wall to hemorrhage, which can lead to anemia and eventually death.

Animals can be born with hookworms. They can also get them through their mother's milk, by ingesting them, or by walking through an infested area. Symptoms include bloody stool or diarrhea, weight loss, and poor quality of the coat. Hookworms are more threatening to younger animals, as they are more at risk due to the iron loss.

If you think your pet may have hookworms, the best thing to do is bring your pet's fecal sample to your vet. If the test is positive, treatment is relatively straightforward; however, treatment should be done monthly for 3-4 months, since the medication only kills the adults. The follow-up treatment will ensure that any

larvae in the animal will then be killed as it matures.

Once it's been detected, however, the problem of eliminating the worms remains. "When I first responded to the call, the neighbors told me they thought something was wrong with the yard, because dogs that lived there over the years didn't seem to do well," says Cahill. "Hookworm larvae can live for years in the soil. These dogs had been kept outside, and their feces had not been picked up," she explains. "In effect, the backyard was a breeding ground for hookworms."

Cahill advised the owner to move the dog house to another area of the yard, and explained the importance of picking up feces immediately. She was worried about the family's health, since humans can also be infected with hookworms.

Cahill continues to follow-up on this case in an effort to see that the dogs stay healthy. "Their owners want to help them; it's just that the process is a long one," she explains.

Please visit our website for links to information on detecting, treating, and preventing hookworms and other internal parasites.

When she's not busy protecting Norfolk's animals, Officer Cahill likes to hang out with her own "crew"—Jack, a 6 year-old Lab/Rottie mix; Josie, an 8 year-old 3-legged Yellow Lab mix; Kate, a 12-year old Siamese mix; and Lynn Lee, an 8 year-old Calico. Not surprisingly, with the exception of Jack, who was adopted from K9 New Life Center, the rest of her "kids" all came from NAMC!



A Happy Ending for Preston

When Mark Bishop visited NAMC last summer, he was in search of a Saint Bernard. He found one, but her cage was right next to the one holding Preston, a 5 year old, 125 lb. Rottie mix. "He was the worst-looking dog I had ever seen," explains Bishop. Though Bishop took both dogs out for some one-on-one time, he had already made his decision, and Preston had a new home.

After a lot of TLC, a much healthier diet, and the removal of a growth behind his ear, Preston looks like a different dog. There is bounce to his gait, and his tail wags affectionately every time he looks at Mark. He is a friendly greeter of guests to their home, and within minutes you are likely to find Preston's head in your lap.

Preston's new family includes Sheba, a 4 year old Rottie, and Tommy, a Tuxedo cat, both rescues as well. "He settled in very quickly, got along with everyone, and never had an accident in the house," says Bishop.

For fun, you are likely to find Preston and Sheba engaged in a heated game of basketball...actually more like basketball tug-of-war! When that gets old, there is always "follow dad while he rides his bike".

You may wonder where such a big dog sleeps at night. Why, in bed with his Dog Dad, of course! "He pretty much just wants to be wherever I am," says Mark.

This summer, Mark plans to introduce Preston to the joys of boat rides and tube rides. NAMC was also happy to hear that before long, Mark would like to grow his family by another dog and cat!



A Happy Ending for Ellie and Monet

When the office cat at Timberlake Veterinary Hospital in Virginia Beach passed on, the staff convinced Dr. Hales to adopt a new feline front desk assistant. NAMC volunteer and Animal Rescue of Tidewater member Jane Lauter (who is a long-time client of the hospital) was called to the rescue. She immediately showed the staff a picture of Monet, a large gray and white short-haired cat who had been at NAMC for a long time. Monet was asked to come in for an "interview". The day Jane went to pick up Monet, she noticed that space was getting really tight in the cat room. At that point, another cat, Ellie the Torti, caught her eye. Like Monet, she had also been at the shelter for a long time. No problem, thought Jane, and she brought both cats over to Timberlake. The staff was enchanted with both girls, and it didn't take long to convince Dr. Hales that two is better than one.

Ellie (renamed Lexie) and Monet (now Timber) "work" at the front desk, and spend their days greeting clients—human, canine, and feline—and assisting Melissa, the receptionist, with the appointment book. Lexie throws the book on the floor from time to time to remind Melissa where it is. Remarkably, even though the two cats had never met at NAMC, they instantly became the best of friends, sleeping together in the same bed, kissing and bathing each other, and embracing. The staff is delighted with their new additions and plans to give them a "raise" very soon.



Bubba's Cat Tales

Bubba has been the office cat of NAMC for several years, so he felt entitled to a column in our newsletter. Those who know cats know they always get their way, so here's what he had to say:

Something strange was underway in one of the back rooms of the shelter this past summer. First, two teenagers came in nearly every day and hauled all this STUFF out of the room...crates, tables, and things cats just don't know the word for. Then they were cleaning...I mean REALLY cleaning. I'll put it this way...they came out of the room looking a lot different than they looked when they first went in! One day, they even came out with bright colors like pink, blue, and yellow on their clothes...I think they used the word "painting".



Being curious by nature, I had to do some investigating of my own. I crept into that room one night after hours, and found the most amazing thing! A huge, bright, cheery room...a mansion to an animal my size!

I have since learned the room is called a "Meet and Greet" room. They made it so families could take time to get to know the dog or cat they were thinking of adopting. They even let dogs or cats that have homes come there to meet a shelter dog or cat that their parents are thinking of adopting.

Some very nice people brought furniture and other things so that the room looks like it would in someone's home...there's a couch for the dogs and a rug for the family to sit on...that's how it works, right?

That room was so popular, they even made a "mini version" of it in the main corridor. People using that room have to sit inside a big fenced area, but they don't seem to mind as long as they can play with a dog.

Take it from me, these new meet and greet areas are "the cat's meow"!

New Year, New License

It's still not too late to purchase 2006 animal licenses! **They are available here at the shelter, and also at the following locations: Office of the City Treasurer** (1st Floor of City Hall, 664-7800), **Norfolk SPCA** (916 Ballentine Blvd., 622-3319), **Best Value Hardware** (1013 E. Bayview Blvd., 583-1484), and **Meadowbrook Hardware** (1215-D W. Little Creek Rd., 489-7293). The City of Norfolk permits a maximum of 4 dogs and 4 cats per dwelling, and any dog or cat over 4 months of age is required by law to have a license. Licenses are valid through Dec. 31, 2006. **License costs are greatly reduced if your pets are spayed or neutered—\$5 per spayed/neutered animal instead of \$25 per unaltered animal.** Please note that you cannot be issued animal licenses without proof of a current rabies certificate for each pet, and the reduced license fee cannot be issued without proof from a vet that the animal has been spayed or neutered.

NAMC and Euthanasia

As a city agency serving citizens and animals of Norfolk, NAMC is required to accept any animal brought to us from within the city. Some are owner surrenders, and are immediately made available for adoption. Others are strays, and are held a certain number of days (5 days if found without a collar; 10 days if found with a collar) before becoming available for adoption. Some animals arrive too sick to be rehabilitated, and sometimes animals who are old, sick, or overly aggressive are brought in by their owners to be euthanized.

The ability of our shelter to keep animals is restricted by three things: enough adopters, enough space, and the animal's behavioral/physical health. Because adoption rates are not as high as we would like, because we have limited kennel space and limited staff to care for the animals, and because sick animals can be a threat to those that are healthy, NAMC must euthanize.

We ask you to understand this is not a decision we make lightly, and it is an emotional issue for us all. Your help in reducing the number of homeless pets, not only through adoption but through spay/neuter of current pets, will reduce the need to euthanize as many animals in the future.